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Watson's Art Journal.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEB. 22, 1868.

PUBLICATION OFFICE, CLINTON HALL, ASTOR PLACE, where all communications should be addressed, and where subscriptions and advertisements will be received.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND OTHERS.—We shall be pleased to receive information from all parts of the country, on the active progress of the Arts of Music and Painting. We will pay especial attention to such information, and will duly chronicle all facts of interest. We invite all to communicate with us, with the assurance that such correspondence will meet with prompt and courteous consideration.

"JUDAS MACCABEUS" AT STEINWAY HALL.

Mr. Lafayette Harrison justifies the saying that "men of genius create their opportunities" by his persevering performances of oratorio, and his creation of a special oratorio audience! More than three thousand persons invaded Steinway Hall on Thursday evening last, dollars in hand, to hear Handel's "Judas Maccabeus." We were delighted to welcome back Madame Parepa Rosa to the scene of her many vocal triumphs, and we are happy to record that her brilliant voice showed not the least sign of her recent illness; it was never more bright, more full, more *éclatante*, than on Thursday evening last, and never did she declaim with more fire and vigor the noble recitative, "Oh, let eternal honors." The air following this, "From mighty kings," she sang with a fluency, grace, and translucent freshness of voice enchanting to listen to, and peals of applause testified the public delight. The quaint and pretty air, "Wise men flattering," and the song, "So shall the lute," with its intricate and melodious network of runs and scales and its delicious luting (to coin a word), were also charmingly and perfectly sung—the latter one tumultuously encored—by this all accomplished artiste who is mistress of all schools, and touches nothing she does not adorn. Miss Brainerd, as the advertisement informed us, undertook the mezzo soprano part, "in order to render the ensemble more perfect." This was very kind of Miss Brainerd, and we trust the ensemble is duly grateful, but it was also very suicidal of Miss Brainerd; for although she sang and phrased the music well and satisfactorily, still the *tessitura* of the song is so entirely out of Miss Brainerd's natural register, that her voice sounded veiled and feeble; and displaced as it was from its proper scale, suffered doubly when contrasted with the silver brilliancy of Madame Rosa's soaring away in its native element, viz., the soprano register. We speak in all kindness, anxious to preserve such a beautiful voice and so correct a method for its true sphere. Messrs. Thomas and Simpson are such favorites with the public and are so well known, that we need only say they fully maintained their high rank in their profession. The Chorus and Orchestra did their duty well and thoroughly, with the exception of two feminine cherubs, who each emitted a feeble, undecided, twittering little chirp, one after the other, during a few beats rest, in the first chorus, and a light headed and melancholy violin, who thought there was a *da capo* to

the march ("which there wasn't"), and indulged in a ghostly and uncomfortable echo sort of solo, for which doubtless he and the above mentioned cherubim have already done mental penance! Apart from these two slips—worth mentioning to prevent repetition—the Chorus and Band were excellent, and we have no quarrel with Mr. Ritter's tempi. After the first part, some person, in a feeling but inaudible address, presented Mr. Ritter with a gold medal as a mark of the New York Harmonic Society's appreciation of his four years' services as conductor. Mr. Ritter feelingly, and also inaudibly, responded, and the presentation was loudly applauded on the platform—the audience joining. To conclude our notice, an appropriate tag suggests itself in the shape of one of Madame Rosa's recitatives, slightly altered for the occasion, and to be sung *Ritter dando*.*

Oh let Harmonic honors crown his name:
Ritter, least worthy in the rolls of fame!
Say, he put on the medal, as a giant!
And whirr'd his feeble baton round him!
In his acts he was *not* like a lion,
Nor did we hear him roaring for his prey!

*"Dando" has the pleasure of being an Italian gerund, which signifies "giving."—*Ritardando* we need not explain.

DR. DOYLE AT IRVING HALL.

For some time past, it was rumored in private circles that Dr. John T. Doyle was about astonishing the New Yorkers with some public delineations of character. Those who had had the opportunity of listening to Dr. Doyle's style of delivering an anecdote, or any number of anecdotes, pronounced him essentially "great" in that respect—in fact, inimitable in Irish anecdote, especially; and so a very modest announcement in the press during the past week sufficed to gather a large and fashionable audience at Irving Hall, on Saturday evening last, to hear him in an original entertainment, entitled, "The Shamrock; or, Chips from the Blarney Stone." The programme was a very lengthy one, but was most faithfully adhered to, and the entertainment lasted from eight o'clock precisely till half-past ten, with only five minutes' intermission.

Dr. Doyle introduced himself to his audience with a short dissertation on the Irish character in general, and in particular its mirth-loving and giving qualities. Moving thence on board the steamer from Holyhead to Kingstown, he introduces Mrs. Pursell, an old lady, who tells such extravagantly humorous tales of "Brian Boroo" and "Julius Sayser," mixed up with her own misfortunes in losing her "plot of ground," as fairly convulsed the audience with laughter. The colloquations of "Tim Grady," the car-driver, did not seem to be so well handled, and failed to produce as great an effect on those present as might be expected; but the police court scene, in which Tim figures as a witness before Mr. Frank Thorpe Porter, the magistrate, was inimitable; it surpassed anything of the kind we have ever seen or heard of. The celebrated "Pickwickian" trial scene of Dickens—Bardell versus Pickwick—falls infinitely short of it in every particular. The description of the personal appearance of each character was intensely comic, whilst the extraordinary powers of impersonation which Dr. Doyle unquestionably possesses—the sudden and complete changes of voice alone being perfectly won-

derful—renders the whole sketch marvelously graphic and humorous, as the aching sides of the audience could well testify.

Next followed a beautifully touching story of an Irish mother's present to her son in Australia, and the meeting between them. This story was told with such rare feeling and power of description as to visibly affect the entire audience, who were wholly unprepared for such an exquisite bit of pathos, after the humorous nature of what went before.

Another great "hit" of the evening was the letter from Pat Ryan in America to his Cousin Mick Dempsey in Ireland. The audience did nothing short of "yelling" with laughter over the reading of this piece of composition; and the local allusions introduced throughout brought down the house with perfect thunders of applause.

Dr. Doyle wields great power over his audience. His style is as various as his anecdotes. It appears to us he can be everything occasion requires—logical, playful, argumentative, severe, pathetic, or burlesque—whilst the inimitable powers he has of adapting his most expressive countenance to the feeling conveyed by his words gives a tone of reality to his impersonations which renders them truly life-like.

The lecture was vocally illustrated by Mr. Arthur Matthison, who sang several ballads in exquisite style, and with a tenderness and grace which won for them enthusiastic encores. Mr. Matthison has a voice of rare beauty, and, under the able direction of Signor Bassini he has gained over it a perfect control, and has developed its rich qualities to a point of refinement which we rarely find even in the best tenor voices. The singing of Mr. Matthison was a brilliant feature of the evening. Mr. Frank Gilder's pianoforte selections were pleasing, and were performed brilliantly and tastefully.

DECKER BROTHERS' PIANOS IN EUROPE.

We have often had occasion to speak of the very beautiful pianofortes of Decker Bros., which are, in all respects, unsurpassed, either in this or any other country, and we now add to our former commendations the hearty praise which comes to us from abroad. It is a singular comment upon our claim to superiority in manufacture, that the instrument sent to Germany by Decker Brothers, has already created so much excitement, that they have, in scarcely a few weeks, received orders for several pianos of the same class. This remarkable success we attribute first, to the superiority of our tone to that produced in Europe; and, secondly, to the high style of finish, both as to interior and exterior, which is unequalled in Europe.

We make the following extract from a letter just received, which fully endorses the preceding remarks:

"The piano you sent me, I received about a fortnight ago, December 21st, and have not noticed it before, because I wanted to give some concerts on it, which I have since done. Our Director and other professional men, and many first-class amateurs, speak of it in the highest terms, and believe me when I say that the whole city was in a state of excitement when the American piano arrived.

"It would be well if you appointed an agent in Darmstadt, where you could dispose of many pianos. In conclusion, I would merely